

# Effects of Trauma and Violence on Health:

## *Early Interventions can Improve Outcomes*

**Experiences of violence and domestic abuse can impact one's physical and mental health, increasing risk of Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome (PTSD), anxiety, and depression. Early interventions are critical.**

- 1 in 3 women and 1 in 4 men have experienced some form of physical violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime.<sup>1</sup>
- Violence can have biological impacts on the body including effects on the brain, the neuroendocrine system, and the body's immune system. This can cause cardiovascular disease and premature mortality.<sup>2</sup>
- Early interventions after trauma (within the first day to week) can help improve long term outcomes related to PTSD.<sup>3</sup>
- Childhood exposure to gun violence can trigger both negative short- and long-term psychological effects including anger, withdrawal, posttraumatic stress, and desensitization to violence. Early mitigation can help alleviate these symptoms.<sup>4</sup>
- 94% of women who are raped experience symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) during the two weeks following the rape, while 47% of women continue to report symptoms of PTSD three months after a rape.<sup>5</sup>

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- PTSD can have long lasting economic impacts on both an individual and society.<sup>6,7</sup>
- Each year, victims of domestic violence are forced to miss approximately 8 million days of paid work, the equivalent of 32,000 full time jobs.<sup>8</sup>
- Victims of partner violence report more tardiness, higher rates of absenteeism, job turnover and unemployment. They are also more likely to lose job advancement opportunities, lose their job, or earn lower wages.<sup>9</sup>
- Exposure to gun violence creates significant trauma. Children are at greater risk for school failure when the trauma of gun violence goes unmitigated.<sup>10</sup>

**Recovery takes time. Paid leave can improve one's ability to get access to care and resources.**

- Multiple states and cities offer paid time off to allow those impacted by violence to seek medical attention, assessment and safety planning, therapy, support to relocate housing and enroll children in new schools, file complaints, seek legal assistance, attend court proceedings and more.<sup>11,12</sup>
- Supportive services are linked to better overall long-term outcomes.<sup>13</sup> Those who experience trauma need support. However, without time off, they may not get the services they need in a timely way.<sup>13</sup>
- Recovery from sexual trauma can take a significant amount of time and produces a wide range of residual symptoms including depression, detachment, insomnia, guilt, and fatigue.<sup>14</sup> Recovery can also take longer than other types of physical assault.<sup>15</sup>
- Those who make the least amount of money and don't have paid sick leave are the least likely to seek medical care or forgo treatment for a physical or sexual assault.<sup>16</sup>
- Psycho-social support and employment play an important role in recovery from PTSD after a rape.<sup>17</sup>



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